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C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 004909

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NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE; NEA/IPA FOR
WILLIAMS/SHAMPAINE/STEINGER; NSC FOR ABRAMS/DORAN/WATERS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/06/2026

TAGS: PREL PGOV ECON ETRD KWBG KPAL IS

SUBJECT: SIGNIFICANT INFRASTRUCTURE WORK UNDERWAY NEAR NEW
E-1 POLICE STATION

REF: JERUSALEM 4075

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles, per reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: A Palestinian foreman working at the construction site of the new Israeli police station located in the E-1 area east of Ma'ale Adumim told poloff December 6 that he had seen plans for the construction of a 600-unit housing complex adjacent to the police station. The foreman said that construction on the police station is expected to be completed by May 2007. Poloff saw significant construction of roads and leveled areas beyond the police station where the foreman said the housing units would be located. The foreman said his crews have been working night and day on the project so that it could be completed quickly. End summary.

¶2. (C) On December 6, poloff observed construction at the four-story West Bank District Police Headquarters in the E-1 area east of Ma'ale Adumim. Poloff spoke with a Palestinian foreman at the site who identified himself as Abu Firas (strictly protect). Although initially fearful of talking to poloff, Abu Firas later said seen plans for the construction of a 600-unit housing complex adjacent to the police station. Poloff witnessed considerable construction of roads and leveling of the grounds in the area west of the station where Abu Firas indicated the residential complex would be constructed. At least two roads, both leading further up the hill where Abu Firas indicated the housing units would be constructed, have already been graded but have not yet been paved. Several areas, both in the vicinity of the police station and on the adjacent hill, have been leveled and presumably are being prepared for construction. A second building approximately 50 feet from the police station building is nearing completion, although Abu Firas said that building is part of the police complex.

¶3. (C) Abu Firas stated that he knows the international community does not want construction in the E-1 area and that he had been instructed to have crews work night and day to make certain the police station would be completed quickly. He said he expects work on the housing, if approved, would be carried out in the same manner.

¶4. (C) Danny Seideman, advocate for the Israeli human rights organization Ir Amim, told poloff November 27 that the construction of the E-1 police station was financed by an organization linked to the Bukharan Jewish Community in Jerusalem. He said that in July 2005, this organization agreed to finance construction of the E-1 Police Station in exchange for property rights to the Ras al-Amud Police Station complex in East Jerusalem, hich will be vacated once the E-1 police stationis operational. Seideman indicated that the areaaround that evacuated police station in Ras

al-Aud would be converted into residential housing.

. (C) Seideman told poloff November 27 that he doe not expect further construction in the E-1 area beyond the police station for the time being. Hait Ofra, Settlement Watch officer with the Israeli NGO Peace Now, similarly told poloff December 4 that she is aware of older plans to build a 3500unit housing complex in E-1 but believes international pressure has stopped these plans for the tim being. However, both noted that past experience indicates that when security installations are esablished in the West Bank, the construction of civilian infrastructure often follows. They pointed out the completion of the police station could foreshadow future residential and commercial building in E-1.

¶6. (C) Comment: We are not surprised that there are plans on the drawing board for residential uits in E-1, even if the GOI has not authorized sch construction there. However, we are more troubled by the infrastructure work underway, which goes beyond what is necessary for the police station. In our view, this construction contradicts GOI assurances to the USG that there would be no work in E-1 beyond the police station. We recommend that the GOI be asked for an explanation.

WALLES